



Policy No. 5.010
Northwest Louisiana Technical College

Travel

Original Adoption: February 10, 2008
Effective Date: February 10, 2008
Last Revision: May 11, 2017

Northwest Louisiana Technical College (NWLTC) Regions and its Campuses follow the guidelines of the Office of the State Travel Guidelines. Traveling employees should become familiar with these guidelines, as well as the State's lodging, meal and travel expense reimbursement rates, which are available on the [Office of State Travel's website](#) before making travel arrangements.

The NWLTC travel policy applies to all employees and officials of the Northwest Louisiana Technical College regardless of the source of funds used to reimburse the employee for his/her travel.

Policy Reference: LTC Policy #FS1930.38 Travel Policy & Procedures Memorandum

Approved:

Earl Meador
Director



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**Travel
Specific Information**

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SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

This travel policy applies to all employees, student organizations and officials of Northwest Louisiana Technical College who travel on behalf of the College, regardless of the source of funds used to reimburse the employee for his/her travel.

DEFINITIONS

Blanket Authorizations, as used in this memorandum, are travel authorizations that are used for routine in-State travel. This authorization covers travel to meetings and functions that are part of the regular duties of the employee. These authorizations are valid for one year but in no case do they extend past June 30th of the fiscal year.

Routine Local Field Travel, as used in this memorandum, includes all routine travel in the local metropolitan area and surrounding parishes.

Non-Routine In-State Travel: includes all travel within the borders of the State of Louisiana.

Non-Routine Out-of-State Travel: includes all travel to other states within the continental United States.

International Travel: includes all travel outside the continental United States.

Professional Leave: is the time the employees are away from the College in order to conduct official business on behalf of the College. This may include professional meetings, workshops, seminars, etc.

AUTHORITY TO AUTHORIZE AND APPROVE TRAVEL

- A. The **Directors/Campus Deans** are delegated authority to authorize travel for NWLTC employees under their jurisdiction.
- B. For special circumstances as listed below, the **Director** has been delegated authority by the State of Louisiana Commissioner of Administration, through the Board of Supervisors of the Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS), to authorize travel. The Director has delegated authority to approve special circumstances and exceptions as described in PPM No. 49, General Travel Regulations.
 - 1. Reimbursement for lodging and meals in excess of Office of State Travel established rates by no more than 25%.
 - 2. Use of State-owned vehicles outside the geographic boundaries of the State of Louisiana.
 - 3. Use of rental vehicles.

GENERAL TRAVEL PROVISIONS

- A. All professional leave and travel **MUST** be approved in advance; the maximum amount of Professional Leave an employee can be granted on any one occasion is ten (10) working days.
- B. All air travel arrangements **MUST** be made by the traveler through the State authorized travel agency, SHORTS Travel Management with payment handled through the College's Controlled Billing Account (CBA). Air travel arrangements made by any other means than the College's CBA or authorized travel agency are not permitted and will not be reimbursed.
(see [State Travel Policy](#))
- C. Ultimately, it is the traveler's responsibility to determine, upon initial notification of an unused air fare ticket and then every 30 days thereafter, if he/she will be utilizing the unused ticket. If it is determined that the ticket will not be utilized prior to expiration and there is a possibility to transfer the ticket, the traveler must immediately advise the Accounts Payable Office that the ticket is available for use by another employee or department. The Accounts Payable Office will then act accordingly to ensure the unused ticket is utilized.

The Director, upon notification by the Accounts Payable Office, at a minimum of three months prior to expiration, must review all unused airfare to recommend, based on the traveler's justification, if the reimbursement from the traveler should be made to the College for the amount of the unused ticket. The Director makes the final determination regarding unused airfare reimbursements. All files must be properly documented.

- D. **All lodging arrangements MUST be made by the traveler** through either the State's optional contracted portal [Hotel Planner](#) or through the conference lodging site at which the traveler is planning to attend. All lodging must be paid for through the College's Controlled Billing Account (CBA). Reimbursement for lodging paid for by any other means than the College's CBA is not allowed. Once your travel authorization is approved and you have picked out your hotel, you will provide the lodging information to Accounts Payable.
- E. All employees attending a conference or event that requires registration MUST register themselves. If payment is required at time of registration, please contact Accounts Payable Office, for assistance. **Registration must be paid for through the College's Controlled Billing Account (CBA)**. Reimbursement for conference/event registration fees paid for by any other means than the College's CBA is not allowed and will not be reimbursed unless it is noted by Accounts Payable that the MCC was not accepted.
- F. Employees traveling on official business are expected to exercise the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business. Excess cost, unnecessary routes, delays, luxury accommodations and services unnecessary or unjustified in the performance of official business are not acceptable and should be avoided.
- G. It is the employee's responsibility to consult the [Louisiana Travel Guide](#) to familiarize themselves with the official State travel regulations and what items are reimbursable prior to the beginning of travel.
- H. Employees traveling on official business will provide themselves with sufficient funds to cover routine travel expenses.
- I. Travel must be for the proper execution of official NWLTC business or implementation of college objectives. Meetings and conferences attended must be of a professional nature that relates to the attending individual's current job duties. Employee must submit Request for Travel Authorization Form.
- J. All NWLTC staff and officials wishing to travel on agency business must complete and submit an Request for Travel Authorization Form **in advance** of travel. The form must be approved by his or her supervisor or appointed designee with budgetary approval from the Finance Office. Non-employee individuals who are requesting reimbursement from NWLTC must also submit a travel authorization before their travel has begun. **The travel authorization must be filled out completely and costs should be estimated as accurately as possible to ensure there are funds to cover travel.**
- K. NWLTC employees who are required to frequently travel in the performance of their official duties may obtain approval for a Certification for Employee Routine Field Travel (Blanket Authorization) Form for In-State travel ONLY. The employee's supervisor and the Director must approve all Certification for Employee Routine Field Travel (Blanket Authorization) Forms. The employee should estimate their annual travel as accurately as possible at the beginning of each fiscal year. Routine field travel (*blanket authorizations*) are valid for one year but in no case do they extend past June 30th of the fiscal year. Approved authorizations must be submitted to the Accounts Payable Department.

GENERAL TRAVEL PROVISIONS CONTINUED...

- L. Out of State travel must have a separate authorization to travel approved by the supervisor and budget department head. International travel must be approved by the NWLTC Director and the Division of Administration.
- M. Conference travel must have a separate authorization to travel approved by the supervisor and department budget head. **In-State conference travel is not covered by a Certification for Employee Routine Field Travel (blanket authorization) form.**
- N. Upon completion of the authorized travel, the Travel Expense Account Form must be submitted for reimbursement and approved by the traveler's appropriate supervisor and budget department head. Those employees, who have Certification for Employee Routine Field Travel (blanket authorization) forms with weekly travel or being funded with a grant, must submit their reimbursement request by Friday of the week following their travel (one week). All other employees with non-routine travel and not being grant funded must submit their travel within 30 days from date of travel.
- O. Personally-owned vehicles may be used for official College business if prior approval has been granted by the Director or CFO and the employee has been authorized to drive on behalf of the College and has taken the NWLTC Defensive Driving Class.
- P. Students not employed by the State will not be authorized to drive State-owned or rented vehicles for use on official State business. A student may be deemed as an "authorized traveler" on behalf of the State by the Director. An authorized traveler can be reimbursed for their travel expenses.
- Q. State-owned vehicles may be used for out-of-State travel only if permission of the Director has been given prior to departure. If a State-owned vehicle is to be used to travel to a destination more than 500 miles from its usual location, documentation that this is the most cost-effective means of travel should be readily available in the department's travel reimbursement files. When the use of a State-owned vehicle has been approved by the Director for out-of-State travel for the traveler's convenience; the traveler is personally responsible for any other expense in-route to and from their destination, which is inclusive of meals and lodging. If a traveler, at the request of the department, is asked to take his/her personally, owned vehicle out-of-State for a purpose that will benefit the College, then the Director may on a case-by-case basis determine to pay a traveler for all/part of in-route travel expenses.
- R. Operating a State-owned vehicle, State-rented vehicle or State-leased vehicle or operating a non State-owned vehicle for State business while intoxicated as set forth in R.S. 14:98 and 14:98.1 is strictly prohibited, unauthorized, and expressly violates the terms and conditions of use of the vehicle. In the even such operation results in the employee being convicted of, pleading nolo contendere to, or pleading guilty to, driving while intoxicated under R.S. 14:98 or 14:98.1, such would constitute evidence of the employee: (1) violating the terms and conditions of the use of the vehicle, (2) violating the direction of his/her employer, and (3) acting beyond the course and scope of his/her employment with the State of Louisiana. Personal use of a State-owned, State-rented, or State-leased vehicle is not permitted.

- S. Generally, employees are not granted a monthly vehicle allowance or a lump sum allowance except for special circumstances as approved by the Director. Employees granted a monthly vehicle allowance or lump sum allowances are not to request or be reimbursed for mileage, fuel or rental vehicles without prior approval from the Commissioner of Administration.
- T. Generally, unauthorized persons should not be transported during the conduction of official State business. Exceptions are allowed in accordance with NWLTC Defensive Driving Class. Appropriate forms **MUST** be completed, such as Hold Harmless.
- U. Only air fare, rental car, hotel and registration/dues are pre-paid directly by the College if the traveler has an approved authorization to travel and the appropriate documentation. Exceptions to this policy require approval of the NWLTC Director. *Some exceptions to prepaid expenses for registration/dues may occur if MCC is not allowable on CBA. If this occurs, Accounts Payable should be notified to attempt payment by check before becoming the responsibility of the traveler. Travelers should provide at least two (2) weeks advance notice for processing of registration/dues.*
- V. Special circumstances and exceptions require written approval from the Director and/or the State of Louisiana Commissioner of Administration as described in PPM No. 49, General Travel Regulations prior to travel.
- W. Meals, fuel and other incidental travel-related expenses, such as taxi fares, airline baggage charges, etc. are the initial responsibility of the traveler and are reimbursed after travel has been completed. Hotel incidentals are not reimbursable. Reimbursement for meals is handled in accordance with the Office of State Travel's reimbursement rates, which are available on the Office of State Travel's website. All reimbursements will be made in accordance to PPM No. 49, General Travel Regulations.
- X. All waivers of PPM No. 49, General Travel Regulation must receive prior approval from the Commissioner of Administration, except in emergency situations.

PROFESSIONAL LEAVE AND TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION APPROVAL CRITERIA

Attendance at conferences, workshops, seminars, etc., must be relevant to the employee's job responsibilities and should accrue benefits to the College. In addition, supervisors must ensure that arrangements have been made for handling the traveling employee's responsibilities during his/her absence. If these criteria are not satisfactorily met, requests may be disapproved even if expenses are paid for by an agency other than the College.

STATE AUTHORIZED TRAVEL AGENCY

The State has entered into an exclusive contract with specific travel agencies to provide travel-related services to employees of all State agencies. These contracts cover all travel by State employees regardless of the source of funds. By using a State-authorized travel agency results in improved services with significant savings to the College.

Use of the State-authorized travel agency for purchasing air fare is *mandatory* unless exemptions have been granted in writing by the Division of Administration prior to travel. As a result, **NWLTC cannot allow employees to purchase airline travel outside of the contracted travel agency**, even if a fare lower than a contracted rate is found. If an employee does purchase airline travel from another agency other than the State travel agency, the college **will not** reimburse the employee for travel.

CASH ADVANCES

Employees needing a cash advance must have prior supervisory approval and must document that they were denied a corporate card or make less than \$30,000 annually. Appropriate documentation to justify the amount of the advance must be attached to the request.

REIMBURSEMENT FOR TRAVEL EXPENSES

- a. The original approved Request for Travel Authorization Form and Travel Expense Account Form must be submitted. Forms must be completed in ink or typewritten and signed by the employee and approved by their supervisor.
- b. Claims for reimbursement of travel expenses should be SUBMITTED TO THE FINANCE OFFICE NO LATER THAN THIRTY (30) DAYS after completion of the travel, unless you have Certification for Employee Routine Field Travel (*blanket authorization*) Form with weekly travel or are being funded with a grant. If you have a *blanket authorization* with weekly travel or are grant funded, you must submit your travel reimbursement request by Friday of the week following your travel (one week).
- c. All original approvals and signatures must be on the Travel Expense Account Form before it is submitted for payment. ONLY originals will be accepted.
- d. All original receipts and documentation should be stapled to the Travel Expense Account Form. Smaller receipts should be attached to a blank sheet of 8 1/2 x 11 paper.
- e. Expenses must be shown on a daily basis with full details. If you are claiming mileage, you must include actual odometer reading or Map Quest print-out.
- f. If employee receives a cash advance, this amount must be subtracted from the gross amount of the claim. Employee must provide original receipts.

ANNUAL AGENCY TRAINING

All travel cardholders or CBA account holders, cardholder or CBA account purchase approvers, program administrators, travel auditor and department head must complete an agency training annually. This training will cover any updates to travel policies and procedures, agency policy and procedures, PPM 49 travel guidelines and other areas of concern.

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Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Earl Meador', written over a horizontal line.

Earl Meador
Director